

REMARKS

In the Office Action mailed January 12, 2005, claims 9, 10, 15, 17 and 22 were allowed; claims 18 and 19 were withdrawn, claims 2-4, 6-8, and 11-13 were "objected to"; claims 1, 5, 14, 16, 20, 21 and 23 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Hashizume et al. (US Patent No. 5,337,128; hereinafter "Hashizume"); and claims 1, 5, 14, 16, 20, 21 and 23 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Nojima et al. (US Patent No. 6,382,858; hereinafter "Nojima"). The foregoing rejections and objections are respectfully traversed.

In accordance with the foregoing, claims 1, 2, 5, 11-14, 16, 20, 21 and 23 have been amended and claims 18 and 19 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claims 1-17 and 20-23 are pending and under consideration.

Specifically, "objected to" claim 2 has been rewritten into independent form to be in condition for allowance. Claims 5, 14, 16, 20 and 21 have been amended to depend from claim 2. Further, claim 11 has been amended to depend from claim 10, and claims 12 and 13 have been amended to depend from claim 11.

Amended claim 1 recites "a blocking bar formed on a leading end near the fusing unit of the guiding member, the blocking bar is slanted upward in a direction towards the fusing unit such that a top portion of the plurality of guiding ribs contacts with a top portion of the blocking bar, wherein a plurality of spaces between the plurality of guiding ribs are blocked by the blocking bar from a space where the fusing unit is formed".

FIGS. 1 and 2 of Hashizume discuss an image forming machine having a material receiving means, a main member, and a guiding member whereby a plurality of guide protrusions are formed on an upper surface of the main member (see column 8, lines 1-2). Further, the main member includes an upstream member which extends substantially horizontally, whereby the main member extends downwardly inclinedly towards a downstream side and then extends substantially horizontally (see column 7, lines 56-65).

FIGS. 10 and 27 of Nojima discuss an internal construction of a recording apparatus having a supply tray, whereby sheets of paper are inserted into a sheet supply path of the recording apparatus while being guided by a left and right guide (see column 5, line 64-column 6, line 1).

Neither of the foregoing references relied upon discuss "...a blocking bar formed on a leading end near the fusing unit of the guiding member, the blocking bar is slanted upward in a direction towards the fusing unit such that a top portion of the plurality of guiding ribs contacts with a top portion of the blocking bar," as recited in amended claim 1.

Amended claim 23 includes similar recitations as the above particular features of amended claim 1.

Moreover, dependent claims 3-8, 10-17 and 20-21 recite patentably distinguishing features of their own. For example, claim 6/5 recites "...wherein the blocking bar has a triangular section with a slope steeper than a section of the guiding ribs".

Withdrawal of the foregoing rejections is respectfully requested.

There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

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